

A New Hope School District White Paper



**1400 Learning Drive
New Hope, PA 19065
610-657-9876**

<http://reformcommissioned845.wikispaces.com>

A Review of Selected Literature and Resources for Teacher Induction Programs

**Submitted to Dr. Bernard Brogan
in partial fulfillment of
ED 845 Fall 2010**

November 7, 2010

NEW HOPE SCHOOL DISTRICT
MENTORING INITIATIVE

Vision Statement:

At New Hope School District all decisions, policies and resources support engaged learning and student achievement in an environment that promotes personal excellence, respect, diversity and civic responsibility every day to enable students to become contributing members of society and successful participants in the global economy.

Mission Statement

The New Hope School District is an organization of caring professionals committed to providing a safe, student-centered learning environment that ensures each child has an opportunity to create his/her destiny through collaboration with families and the community.

SWOTS Applicable to Mentoring Initiative

Strengths

- Tradition of excellence
- Committed staff
- High expectations of professional growth through education/training for teachers
- Fair/Balanced evaluation structure for management and staff
- Competitive salary
- Strong school tradition (school spirit)

Weaknesses

- Blanketed directives/policies from school board
- Outdated technology and resources
- Outdated curriculum/textbooks
- Mixed population of the economic disadvantage and affluent
- Insufficient professional development

Opportunities

- Increasing population of retirements/hiring of new teachers
- Corporations within school district

Threats

- Merit pay/teachers threatened by test results
- Too much time focused on testing/teaching to the test
- Time stolen due to NCLB
- Global change

ISLLC Standards Components Addressed By The Mentoring Initiative**Standard 1: The Vision Of Learning**

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation and stewardship of a school or district vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community (CCSSO, 1996, p. 10).

- Component 1a: Developing the Vision
- Component 1b: Communicating the Vision Component

Standard 2: The Culture Of Teaching And Learning

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth (CCSSO, 1996, p.12).

- Component 2a: Valuing Students and Staff
- Component 2b: Developing and Sustaining the Culture
- Component 2c: Ensuring an Inclusive Culture

Standard 3: The Management Of Learning

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations and resources for a safe, efficient and effective learning environment (CCSSO, 1996, p.14).

- Component 3a: Making Management Decisions to Ensure Successful Teaching and Learning
- Component 3b: Developing Procedures to Ensure Successful Teaching and Learning
- Component 3c: Allocating Resources to Ensure Successful Teaching and Learning
- Component 3d: Creating a Safe, Healthy Environment to Ensure Successful Teaching and Learning

Statement of the Problem

Research has consistently found that brand-new teachers make “important gains in teaching quality in the first year and smaller gains over the next few career years” (NCES 2005). It is also known that a significant number of new teachers leave the profession within the first three years of employment. Here at The New Hope School District we are interested in the success of our students. However, in order for our students to be successful and derive worthwhile growth, their teachers must also achieve a high degree of success in their chosen field. In support of the educators new to our district, a mentor program has been implemented. This mentor program surely offers a welcome alternative to the "sink or swim" mentality. The program is a suggestive structure with content to facilitate a more comprehensive experience for both mentor and mentee.

With luck, guidance and hard work it is hoped that teachers new to the profession will find their vocational home here at the New Hope School District. It is intended for this mentor program to eventually come full circle for the individual to the degree that in time former mentees will become the mentors thus sharing perspective and experience from both sides of the issue.

Discussion and Review of the Literature

The choice to become a teacher is an admirable one. However, there are many issues a new teacher must consider as they complete their training and finally enter the classroom. The rules and pitfalls of the educational environment are many. Several

investigations show that first year teachers do not make it to the end of the first year of teaching and still more don't make it past the fifth year.

The needs for and provisions of teacher mentoring/induction programs can be rationalized on several levels. However, most concerning is the turnover rates and attrition of new teachers in the first few years of their career. According to The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2010) "Among public school teachers with 1–3 years of experience, 77.3 percent stayed in their base-year school, 13.7 percent moved to another school, and 9.1 percent left teaching in 2008–09." With a 22.8% transient population the problem of attrition becomes a very real issue to the make up of building faculties from year to year. According to a study from the National Education Association, half of new U.S. teachers are likely to quit within the first five years because of poor working conditions and low salaries (Lambert, 2006).

In order to stem the hemorrhaging of new teachers from the profession and the mobility of teachers from building to building induction programs are very necessary. Among those leaving teaching, the five most commonly reported sources of dissatisfaction were a lack of planning time (60 percent), too heavy a workload (51 percent), too many students in a classroom (50 percent), too low a salary (48 percent), and problematic student behavior (44 percent) (NCES, 2005).

Anecdotally one can ascertain that entry into the vocation of teaching is not motivated by a primary need for a high salary. It is reported that individuals enter the

teaching profession to help shape the next generation. Nearly three out of four (73%) enter teaching because of their desire to work with young people. And nearly seven out of 10 teachers (68%) cite it as the reason for remaining in the profession. (NEA, 2006). However, salary does remain an issue in the context of the lack of planning time, too heavy a workload and problematic student behavior. With these three problems thwarting one's efforts anyone may come to the conclusion that "They don't pay me enough to put up with this stuff!" This is where the guidance of a veteran teacher mentor can be very helpful to counteract the anxiety generated from the factors above. According to one young teacher: "The kids were wonderful to be with, but the stress of everything that went with it and the low pay did not make it hard to leave..." (Lambert, 2006).

There are many studies, articles and commentary on the attrition of teachers and the factors which contribute to such turnover. However, according to Ingersol & Smith (2004) "beginning teachers who were provided with mentors from the same subject field and who participated in collective induction activities, such as planning and collaboration with other teachers, were less likely to move to others schools and less likely to leave the teaching occupation after their first year of teaching." With this idea in mind induction programs are now mandatory in the State of Pennsylvania (PA Code, § 49.16).

At the present time forty-three (43) states have mentoring policies (Kaufmann, 2007). The implementation of induction programs are the responsibility of each public school entity. However Kaufmann (2007) states that effective mentoring programs share the following characteristics:

- The use of experienced, well-trained teachers as mentors
- Are based upon well-defined program standards
- Are adequately funded
- Include a good evaluation process of new teachers
- Go beyond the first year of a teacher's career
- Are part of a larger effort that includes reduced teaching loads, appropriate class placements, ample opportunity for observation of other teachers and targeted professional development.

According to Heider (2005), isolation is sighted as a major contributing factor to teacher attrition. Pairing a novice teacher with a veteran educator would certainly help alleviate feelings of isolation. A mentor is a person described by the literature as a person with at least three (3) years of successful teaching experience, has undergone mentoring training and is willing to serve as a mentor. Mentors can also provide the much-needed moral and emotional support for the beginning teacher. As with any new endeavor human beings have a need to understand and organize the what, how and why of their surroundings. Not possessing or finding the answers to these concepts can foster anxiety and worst-case scenario perceptions which can be terrifying.

Here at New Hope School District our mentors are more than the clinical description of mentors. Mentors are paired with new teachers by subject matter to act as coach, cheer leader, someone to commiserate with, a shoulder to cry on, confidant, road map, bureaucratic advisor, how to resource, etc.... In many cases the mentor can become a friend to the beginning teacher thus through the above roles reinforcing the fundamental reasons most individuals decide to teach.... To work with young people, to make a

difference and to help our most precious commodity be as productive, successful and happy in their role as successors in the running of our world.

The Oregon Department Of Education & Oregon Education Association (2010) delineate some specific characteristics and rationale for a mentor program:

Basic Assumptions About Mentoring

- Beginning educators need and deserve ongoing professional development opportunities.
- Mentoring is the central feature of any successful beginning educator induction program.
- Without mentoring, new staff will focus on survival. With mentoring, new staff can focus on professional development and serving students.
- Mentors and protégés both gain from the experience.
- Mentor programs built on a knowledge base of best practices have the greatest potential for success.
- If a district has expectations for a mentoring program, a formal program with in-depth mentor preparation and support must be in place.
- Mentoring partnerships can vary widely, from one-on-one mentor-protégé partnerships, to teams of mentors working with single or multiple protégés.

Mentoring With Purpose

Mentoring can support induction, instructional improvement, and a change in the culture of a school to a more collaborative learning environment. The purpose or mission of a mentoring program will have a profound impact on a school's culture and will drive every other decision about the program. Therefore, the purpose of a mentoring program should be determined early and maintained as a focus to allow for evaluation of the effectiveness of later decisions.

Common options for mentor program purposes include:

- To expedite the learning of a new job or skill, reducing the stress of transition from pre-service programs.
- To improve instructional performance through modeling by a master educator.
- To attract new staff in a very competitive recruiting environment.
- To retain excellent veteran staff in a setting where their contributions are valued.

- To respond to state, district, or contractual mandates.
- To promote the socialization of new staff into the school culture.
- To create a collaborative and positive climate within a school.
- To assist beginning teachers in the development of a deep understanding of specific subject areas and instructional methods.
- To promote a beginning teacher or administrator's reflection on their own professional practices.
- To provide emotional and social support for beginning teachers and administrators.

(Oregon Department Of Education & Oregon Education Association, 2010. *Oregon Mentor Program Handbook*.)

In our current edu-political climate our most valuable assets are committed individuals dedicated to the vocation of teaching children to be the best they can be, find a dream and then follow it to the highest achievable level. While children are our most precious commodity, it is the dedication and the self-efficacy of the educator which help subsequent generations of ourselves to not just perpetuate our species, but do so in ways which enrich and improve the human condition. Education has evolved into a complicated and convoluted landscape full of traps and difficulties. Our new teachers need guidance to navigate this terrain as to not become disillusioned or fall into a cynical despair leading them to believe that their ideals were foolish utopian dreams.

We as educators owe it to the individuals who make the leap of faith to become teachers and our children to ensure the success of new teachers, to weed out those not suited to teaching and to provide the support for novice teachers to become master educators of the 21st century. Our current education system is racked with pitfalls and roadblocks placed there by clueless politicians and incompetent policymakers. However, this is the climate in which the true professionals of education must find a way to be

successful in spite of and circumventing the barriers placed before them. It is easy to become apathetic and complacent. However, the ideal that is the mentoring of people new to the teaching profession is essential to uphold. The literature cited in this body of work is far from exhaustive. However, in consort all such writings concur on the need and urgency of the investment of resources in our new teachers. Our children are depending on it and our obligation to our posterity demands it.

References & Resources

- Aud, S., Hussar, W., Planty, M., Snyder, T., Bianco, K., Fox, M., Frohlich, L., Kemp, J., Drake, L. (2010). *The Condition of Education 2010 (NCES 2010-028)*. National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC. Retrieved November 5, 2010, from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2010/2010028.pdf>
- Behrstock, E. (2010). *Talent Management in the Private and Education Sectors: A Literature Review*. Naperville, IL: Learning Point Associates.
- Bren, Donald. (2010). *School of information and computer sciences mentoring handbook*. U. C. Irvine. Retrieved November 5, 2010, from www.ics.uci.edu/bin/pdf/ics_mentor_mentorhbk.pdf
- Brown, H. J. (1992). *Live learn and pass it on*. Nashville, TN: Rutledge Hill Press.
- Buckley, J., Schneider, M., Shang, Y. (2004). *Teacher Attrition: A Review of Literature. Teaching and Teacher Education*. Boston College, Lynch School of Education. Retrieved November 5, 2010, from <http://www.edfacilities.org/pubs/teacherretention.cfm>
- Carlson, R. (1997). *Don't sweat the small stuff... and it's all small stuff*. New York: Hyperion.
- Covey, S. (1989). *The 7 habits of highly effective people*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Davis, Barbara; Higdon, Kimberly. (2008). The effects of mentoring/induction support on beginning teachers' practices in early elementary classrooms (K-3). *Journal of Research in Childhood Education [On-line]*, 3(22). *The Free Library*. (2008). Retrieved November 07, 2010 from [http://www.thefreelibrary.com/The effects of mentoring/induction support on beginning teachers'...-a0178347706](http://www.thefreelibrary.com/The+effects+of+mentoring/induction+support+on+beginning+teachers'...-a0178347706)
- Dreibelbis, E. (2002). *Plan for induction of new teachers 2002-2008*. Kinzers, PA: Pequea Valley School District.
- Eaton, E., Sisson, W. (2008). *Why are new teachers leaving? The case for beginning-teacher induction and mentoring*. ICF International. Retrieved November 07, 2010 from www.icfi.com/publications/register/download-register.asp?pubid=596
- Faber, A. & Mazlish, E. (1995). *How to talk so kids can learn at home and in school*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Framingham Public Schools, Framingham, MA. Framingham public schools mentor program handbook. Retrieved November 5, 2010, from http://www.framingham.k12.ma.us/hr_support.cfm.

Heider, K.L. (2005). Teacher Isolation: How mentoring programs can help. *Current Issues in Education* [On-line], 8(14). Retrieved October 14, 2010, from <http://cie.ed.asu.edu/volume8/number14/>

Ingersoll, R., Smith, T. (2004). What are the effects of induction and mentoring on beginning teacher turnover? *GSE Publications*. University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education. Reprinted from *American Educational Research Journal*, 41(3) 681-714. Retrieved November 5, 2010, from http://repository.upenn.edu/gse_pubs/135/

[iTunes U](#) - Apple's free online portal for educational video and audio downloads. Retrieved November 5, 2010, from <http://www.apple.com/education/itunes-u/>

Jefferson County Teacher Induction Program 2009-2010, Dandridge, TN. Retrieved November 5, 2010, from http://jc-schools.net/induction/JCS_TIP_Handbook.pdf

Kaufmann, Jeanne (2007). *Helping state leaders shape education policy*. Education Commission of the States (ECS). Denver, CO

Mentoring Educators Website (2010). Retrieved November 5, 2010, from <http://www.mentoringeducators.org/mentoring-program.php>

New Teacher Center, The (NTC). (2010). Continuum of teacher development. Retrieved October 14, 2010, from http://www.newteachercenter.org/ti_continuum_of_teacher.php

Operation Public Education (2010). Support for educators. *A grand bargain for education reform*. University of Pennsylvania. Retrieved October 14, 2010, from http://www.cgp.upenn.edu/ope/34_mentoring.html

Oregon Education Association, Oregon Department Of Education (2010). Oregon mentor program handbook. Retrieved November 5, 2010, from <http://www.oregoned.org/site/pp.asp?c=9dKKKYMDH&b=139761>

Pennsylvania Code, The. (2007). § 49.16. Approval of induction plans. Retrieved November 2, 2010, from <http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/chapter49/s49.16.html>

Retaining Teacher Talent. (2010). [Website]. Retrieved October 14, 2010, from <http://www.learningpt.org/expertise/educatorquality/genY/>

Rutherford, P. (2005). *21st century mentor's handbook*. Just Ask Publications. Alexandria, Va.

SRI International. (2010). [Website]. Retrieved October 14, 2010, from
<http://www.sri.com/policy/>

Wong, H. & Wong, R (2001). How To Be An Effective Teacher: The First Days Of
School. Mountain View, CA: Wong Publications